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TRUE PRINCIPLES

OF

Roman Catholics.

*Philalibion*

K

BE READY ALWAYS TO GIVE AN ANSWER TO EVERY  
MAN THAT ASKETH YOU A REASON OF THE HOPE  
THAT IS IN YOU WITH MECKNESS AND FEAR.

1 Peter, 3, 15.

NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT:

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1796.



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## INTRODUCTION.

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*To* refute, and remove the numerous calumnies and misrepresentations which have been broached, and still subsist, against the principles and religious practices of Roman Catholics, perhaps would prove as impossible as to dissipate the clouds, that obscure the light of the sun on the darkest day in December. Though you should succeed in some points, the enemy of truth and union would still raise new obstacles to the completion of your wishes. The matters alluded to, may be found in abundance, in England's Bloody Tribunal, the book called of Martyrs, several commentaries upon the Revelations, &c. &c. &c. Even in this age of light and liberality, a reverend gentleman in his travels through Spain, has sometimes wandered out of his way into the too long beaten path of calumny, and with the empoisoned poinard of slander, has, Joab like, endeavoured to give several deadly  
stabs

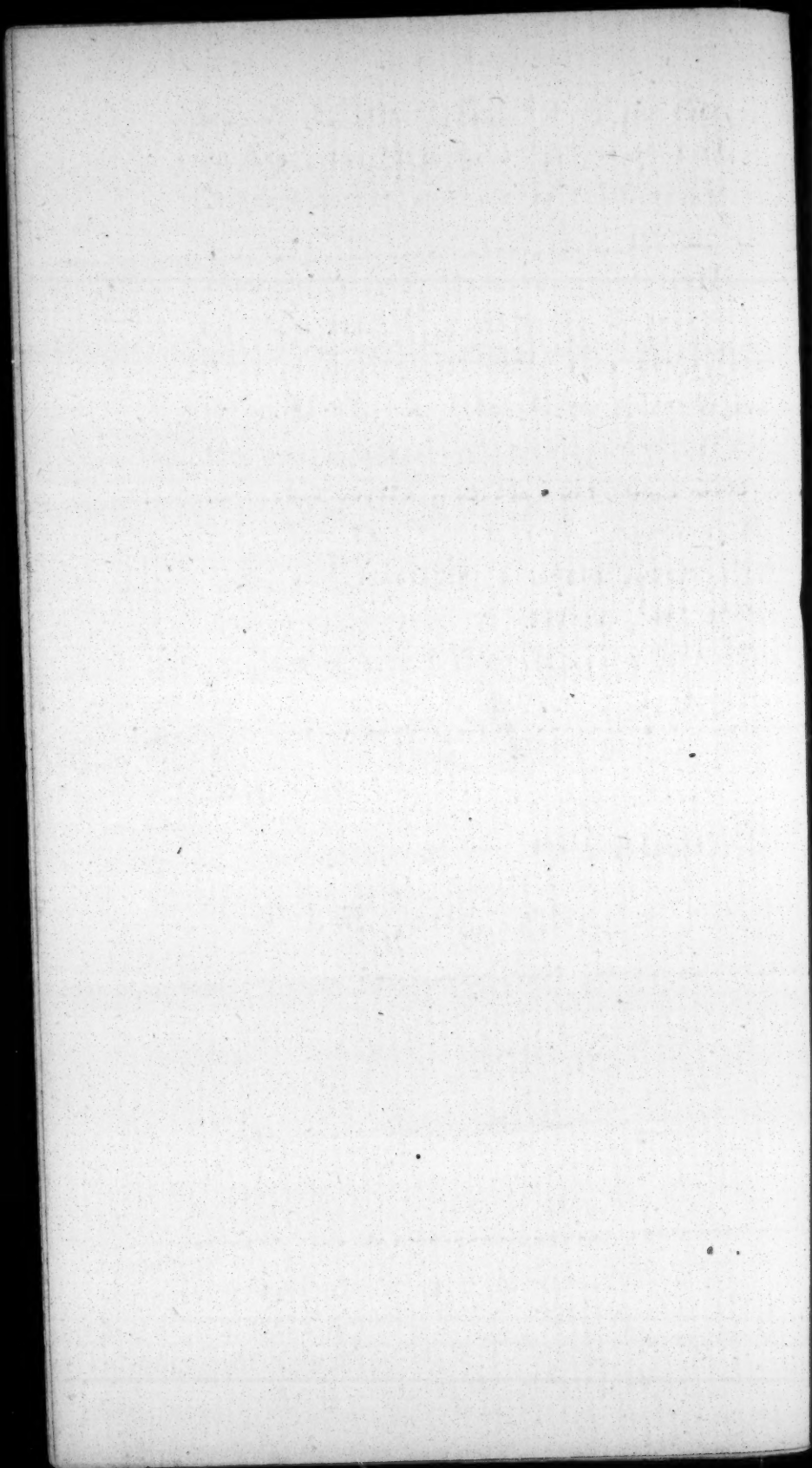
*flabs to the moral character of the Clergy, the King, and the principal people of a whole Christian nation. Instances of a similar nature are frequent in many other modern publications. The best and least offending answer perhaps may be a candid exposition of the true principles of Roman Catholics. This may afford satisfaction to the sincere lovers of truth and union, (to others nothing in our power can work that effect) since these principles always have been, and ever will be invariably the same, and whatever does not square with such principles, is no more a part of the religion of Roman Catholics, than the treason of Judas was of the religion of the Apostles, or the rebellion of Lucifer of that of the Angels.*

PHILALBION.

N. I. W. Jan. 5, 1796.

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THE  
TRUE PRINCIPLES, &c.

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1st. **W**E believe in one only true and living God, the Lord and Creator of all things: subsisting in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. To this God alone, we give divine honour, and adoration: and we detest with our whole souls, all kind of idolatry; that is, all such wickedness, by which divine worship is given to any false God, or idol, or any person, or thing whatsoever, besides the one true and living God. We honour indeed the blessed Virgin, the mother of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, but not as a Goddess, nor with any part of divine worship. We honour the angels, and saints of God, as his servants. We honour his priests, his churches, his altars, his word, and whatever else has relation to him! but all for his sake, and by an honour that is

referred to him, but not that honour which he has appropriated to himself. Such also is the veneration we have for the cross, for relicks, and for the pictures of our Redeemer, and his saints: we value them as memorials of Christ, and his holy ones; as representations of our Redeemer, or of our redemption: as helps to pious thoughts, and affections: but we condemn and anathematize all such as would pray to them, or believe any divinity or power inherent in them, or give them divine worship. See the second Council of Nice, Act. 7. and the Council of Trent. Sess. 25.

2dly. We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God; who for us sinners, and for our salvation, was made man; that he might be the Head, the High Priest, the Advocate, and Saviour of all Mankind. We acknowledge him our only Redeemer, who paid our ransom by dying for us on the cross; that his death is the fountain of all our good; and that mercy, grace, and salvation, can by no means be obtained, but through him. We confess him to be the Mediator of God and Man, the only Mediator of redemption, and the only Mediator of intercession too: who  
intercedes



intercedes in such manner, as to stand in need of no others merits to recommend his petitions. But as for the saints of God, we address ourselves indeed to them, to desire their prayers, (as we do also to God's servants here upon earth) but no otherwise than that they may pray for us, and with us, to our common Lord, who is our God, and their God, through the merits of the same Jesus Christ, who is our Mediator, and their Mediator. See the Council of Trent. Sess. 25.

3dly. We believe the scriptures of the old and new testament to be the word of God: we have the highest veneration of their divine authority, and had rather die than disbelieve, or doubt of one jota or tittle of them: and if at any time, or in any place, the pastors of our church have restrained the ignorant from reading them, it was not out of disrespect to these sacred volumes, much less out of a sacrilegious design, to keep the people by that means in ignorance and error; but purely because the unlearned (as the scriptures themselves inform us) are apt to wrest them to their own destruction 2 Peter. iii 16. And if we also receive unwritten traditions, as part of  
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the word of God, we mean no other traditions but such as are divine, and which we know to be divine, by the same means by which we know the scriptures.

4thly. We believe that in order to enter into life we must keep the commandments of God, and that whosoever dies in the guilt of a wilful breach of any one of these divine precepts, will be eternally lost.— That no power upon earth can give any man leave to break any commandment of God, or commit any sin whatsoever, or to do evil that good may come of it. That neither the Pope, nor any man living, can dispense with the law of God, or make it lawful for any one to lye, to forswear himself, or do any other thing that is forbidden in the divine law.

5thly. We believe that neither Priest, Bishop, nor Pope, nor any power in heaven or earth, can forgive any man his sins, without a hearty repentance, and a serious purpose of amendment. That the indulgences granted in our church are neither a leave to commit sin nor yet a pardon for sins to come, but only a release of the temporal punishment due to our sins; and that no indulgences can avail any man to-

wards

wards this release till by a hearty repentance, he has renounced the guilt of his sins.

6thly. Our faith teaches us to detest all massacres, treasons, and murders whatsoever, whether committed by Protestants against Catholics, or by Catholics against Protestants. We look upon these as the very greatest of crimes that can be committed betwixt man and man; and such as cannot be justified by any pretext of religion. And so far are Catholics from thinking it no sin to murder heretics, (which is so falsely and unjustly imputed to them) that in all kingdoms and states, which profess the Catholic religion, any such murderer of heretics, must certainly look for nothing else but death by the laws of the country, and damnation if he dies impenitent, by the faith and doctrine of his Church.

7thly. As to the blessed Eucharist, we believe it to be both a Sacrament and a Sacrifice. In this Sacrament and Sacrifice, we adore not the bread and wine (which would indeed be a most stupid idolatry) but Jesus Christ, the Son of God; whom (upon the strongest grounds of the word of  
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God,

God, and the authority of he church of God) we believe to be really present in the sacred mysteries. And it is to his passion and death, (which we there celebrate and offer to God) we attribute all that propitiation, and grace, which we look for from that sacrifice which we call the Mass.

8thly. In fine we believe that no man can be justified, either by the works of the law of nature or of the law of Moses, without faith in Jesus Christ. That we cannot by any precedent works, merit the grace of justification. That all the merit of our good works is the gift of God: and that every merit and satisfaction of ours, entirely depends on the merits and passion of Christ. See Council of Trent. Sess. 6.

These are our real principles, taught by our Church in her Councils, and learnt by her children in their very catechisms.— These true Catholic principles, we are ready not only to sign with our own hands, but if called to it, and assisted by divine grace, to seal also with our blood. We renounce, detest, and anathematize all contrary doctrines imputed to us by the father of lies, or any of his agents; who are, and always have been busy to misrepresent



present, and slander the Church of God. But what wonder? Christ our Lord was thus treated, so were the primitive Christians: and he himself foretold, his disciples should be treated in the same manner. Mat. ix. As to the private opinions, or practices of particulars, if in any thing they have been contrary to these catholic principles, the Church is no ways answerable for them. There was a Judas amongst the Twelve. Let such Criminals answer for themselves: we detest their doings and daily pray that such scandals may be removed. But alas! as long as men are men, scandals there will be, till the Great Judge comes to rid his kingdom of them, and send them to their proper place.





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